Ministry of Attorney General

2013 - 14 – Annual Accessibility Plan

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2013 – 14 Accessibility Plan

Message from the Ministry Accessibility Executive Champion

I am pleased to present the Ministry of the Attorney General's 11th annual ODA Accessibility Plan. Over the last decade we have made great strides in removing barriers and improving accessibility in the ministry's programs and services. Accessibility is at the heart of our public service, ensuring that the people of Ontario are all able to equally access, use and receive the services they need.

Looking back on the past year, I am happy to note our accessibility accomplishments in many areas, especially the development of our built environment strategy which will guide us towards our goal of full accessibility in our facilities by 2025. The ministry strives for continuous improvement and will continue to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers in all our programs and services to ensure that justice is accessible to everyone.

I am proud to be the ministry's executive champion for accessibility and remain committed to working with all of you as we move forward.

Sincerely,

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Introduction

For over ten years, every ministry has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Ministries achieve this through the preparation of their annual ODA Accessibility Plan (ODA plan) as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Recently, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) established Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes standards in areas such as: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment. In 2010 the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) complied with the requirements of the first standard on customer service. In 2011, ministries began to meet the requirements of the other four standards found in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

On January 1, 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) published a single Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP). The MYAP included the following commitment:

> The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities.

MAG's ODA plan will build on these laws as well as the MYAP by demonstrating how the ministry will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025. To access this and other ministries' 2012 – 13 ODA Accessibility Plans, please visit Ontario.ca.

MAG is committed to creating and promoting accessibility in Ontario's justice sector. As the ministry responsible for the development of accessibility legislation, MAG has positioned itself as a government leader in the ongoing work to remove and prevent barriers for Ontarians with disabilities. The ministry implements the accessibility standards provided by the AODA as a means of identifying and removing barriers in its programs and services.

This plan is divided into three sections and primarily covers activities completed between November 1, 2012 and October 31, 2013. Section one is a report back on the ministry's achievements last year. Section two lists the proposed commitments for November 1, 2013 – October 31, 2014; and section three is a report on the ministry's legislative review.

Note: In some sections, related commitments have been combined into one larger commitment in an effort to streamline how the information is reported and to facilitate ease of understanding for the reader. The results of all planned commitments have been included in this plan.

Section One: Report on Commitments and Achievements in 2012-13

Customer Service

As part of our compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) has implemented the Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service policy which guides our customer service for persons with disabilities. The ministry has also requested that divisions collect feedback about the accessibility of their programs and services and those of their service providers.

Below is a list of some of the achievements recorded against each of the customer service commitments that the ministry made in the 2012-13 Accessibility Plan.

1. Last year, the ministry made a commitment that Courthouse Accessibility Coordinators (AC) will continue to act as the main point of contact for information or requests for accommodation for courthouse proceedings, programs and counter services. In addition, we stated that Accessibility Leads (AL) in Crown Attorneys' Offices and Victim Witness Assistance Program offices will continue to respond to requests in their own programs and work in cooperation with the courthouse Accessibility Coordinators.

Achievements

On this commitment, the ministry has achieved the following:

- The Accessibility Coordinators and Accessibility Leads responded to 366 requests for accommodation during the past year. This included a wide range of requests ranging from basic questions and simple assistance to more complex accommodations. The most common requests were for sign language interpretation, assistive listening devices and mobility-related requests and assistance (e.g., providing a wheelchair for use at a courthouse, opening doors, and providing assistance with using elevators or lifts).
- Other accommodation requests included the provision of: real-time captioning for people who have a hearing impairment; communications supports and equipment (e.g., note-taking, portable or adjustable microphones); alternative formats of documents and forms for court-users who are blind and access to teleconferences or video conferences to allow people who experience barriers travelling to or within a courthouse to participate outside the courthouse.

- More information on the Accessibility Coordinator service, including contact information, can be found on the ministry's website, under the Court address section.

2. Another commitment the ministry made was that the Accessibility Unit will work co-operatively with the Courts Accessibility Subcommittee (CAS), courthouse Accessibility Coordinators and Accessibility Leads to identify and provide additional training, guidance or supports required by Accessibility Coordinators and Accessibility Leads over the coming year. We also committed that the Accessibility Unit will complete its two year project to implement assistive listening devices (ALDs) in all permanent courthouses.

Achievements

- The Courts Accessibility Subcommittee led the regional and local implementation of assistive listening devices ALDs across the ministry. Assistive listening devices have been implemented in all permanent courthouses and are available upon request for all court users and ministry clients including parties of a court proceeding, lawyers, judges, jurors, witnesses, and Supervised Access Program participants.

- Over 500 court staff has been trained on setting-up and operating the assistive listening devices.

- Signs are posted in courthouses about the availability of assistive listening devices and information about assistive listening devices and how to request them has been posted on the ministry's website. More information can be found on "Our Commitment to Accessibility" webpage.

- Courts Accessibility Subcommittee developed a training plan for the Accessibility coordinators and Accessibility Leads for the coming year. Training will focus on two topics: 1) accessibility for people with a hearing loss or who are Deaf; and 2) accommodation for court-users with disabilities and the Human Rights Code.

- Courts Accessibility Subcommittee provided input on ministry plans and initiatives such as accessible documents, scent-free awareness plans, and the ministry's plans for providing Teletype services (TTY's) in some ministry locations.

- Discussions about the Fragrance Free / Scent Free plan were held at MAG's Accessibility Executive Steering Committee and the Courts Accessibility Subcommittee.

3. A third commitment the ministry made was that a courthouse Accessibility Coordinator Regional Lead and a member of the ministry Accessibility Unit will provide a presentation on the courthouse accessibility coordinator service to a group of practicing lawyers in an education session offered by the Law Society of Upper Canada.

   We stated that the session will be taped for presentation to future groups and that a similar presentation was being planned in February 2013 for a group of law students through an education session also offered by the Law Society of Upper Canada. These opportunities will help to inform legal counsel of services that can benefit their clients with disabilities.

Achievements

To date, the ministry has recorded the following achievements:

- Ministry staff participated in presenting the following online legal education sessions on accessibility to the justice sector community. The sessions were offered by the Law Society of Upper Canada and coordinated by the Legal Education Subcommittee of the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee.
  - A courthouse Accessibility Coordinator Regional Lead and a member of the ministry Accessibility Unit provided a presentation on the courthouse Accessibility Coordinator service as part of a webinar training session on November 8, 2012 on "Enhancing Access to the Courts for People with Disabilities." By September of 2013, 1600 participants had viewed the training session.
  - A member of the Accessibility Unit also participated as a panelist in the May 14, 2013 webinar training session "Enhancing Access to the Courts for People with Disabilities: Practical Strategies for Accommodation" which covered topics such as Sign Language Interpreting, real-time captioning and accommodating people with mental health disabilities. As of September 2013, over 1300 legal professionals had viewed the training session.
- A member of the Accessibility Unit also provided a presentation on the courthouse Accessibility Coordinator Service as part of the mandatory course instruction for articling students.

4. Another customer service commitment the ministry made last year was that the Accessibility Unit will continue to work with the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee (OCAC) and its subcommittees as well as with the ministry Accessibility Executive Steering Committee (AESC) and the Courts Accessibility Subcommittee (CAS) to monitor and improve accessibility in the courts and in the ministry. We also stated that

the Accessibility Unit will continue to work with the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee on a plan for Fragrance Free Awareness signage and information for courthouses.

Achievements

On this commitment, the ministry has achieved the following:

- The Accessibility Unit continued to provide secretarial support and accessibility expertise to the ministries accessibility committees:
    - The Accessibility Unit provided secretarial support to Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee which is a justice sector stakeholder committee on accessibility. The Committee is co-chaired by a Justice of the Court of Appeal and the Assistant Deputy Attorney General of the Court Services Division of the ministry of the Attorney General and includes representatives of the judiciary, bar, ministry and disability community. The Accessibility Unit also supported the production of the Committee's newsletter "Accessibility in Brief."
    - The Accessibility Unit also supported the Accessibility Executive Steering Committee which is made up of accessibility representatives from each division in the ministry. This committee works to ensure that accessibility initiatives are discussed and communicated throughout the ministry.
    - Secretarial support was provided to Courts Accessibility Subcommittee. This committee was established to address accessibility needs in the courthouses.
- The Accessibility Unit continued to work on a Fragrance Free / Scent Free plan for promoting awareness about the health impacts of fragrances and scented products on people who have multiple chemical sensitivities, environmental sensitivities or other health conditions such as asthma and allergies.
    - Discussions about the Fragrance Free / Scent Free plan were held at MAG's Accessibility Executive Steering Committee and the Courts Accessibility Subcommittee.

Information and Communications

The ministry serves a wide range of customers with diverse needs and abilities and is aware of the need to provide information and communication in alternate formats for those people who experience barriers in accessing standard formats. The ministry is committed to ensuring that key public documents and forms are created in more universally accessible formats and in plain language. In addition, the ministry is committed to developing processes and protocols to handle requests for accessible formats and communications supports.

1. One of the commitments the ministry made last year was to continue its strategy to provide information and communication in accessible formats by:

   - Providing alternate formats upon request and developing internal processes to respond to requests for accessible documents,
   - Providing accessible feedback procedures,
   - Reviewing existing and new documents to ensure that they are in plain language and accessible electronic format where possible; and by
   - Posting information on the provision of accessible formats and communication supports on the ministry's Accessibility webpage.

Achievements

The following are the achievements the ministry has recorded to date:

Alternate formats Implementation:

- The AU has provided guidance and information sessions to different areas of the ministry on the importance of providing accessible formats. Information has been posted on the ministry's website about how to make requests for accessible formats and communication supports. This can be found on "Our Commitment to Accessibility" webpage.
- Family Programs and Policy Branch (FPPB) collaborated with Legal Aid Ontario to create both an on-line format and DVD of the Mandatory Information Program (MIP). Both versions were created in English and French, and the DVD is also available in sign language and closed captioning.
- Family Programs and Policy Branch, in partnership with a working group made up of representatives from aboriginal agencies, adapted its Mandatory Information Program's script to meet the needs and reflect the legal and cultural concerns for aboriginal families experiencing a relationship breakdown. The DVD is now available for distribution to aboriginal families who may face disability-related barriers in attending in-person MIP sessions.
- The Corporate Services Management Division has implemented several procedures to increase accessibility in their documents:
  - All incoming documentation is reviewed to confirm that employees have used plain language and accessible formatting.
  - The corporate services division intranet site ensures all uploaded new documents are written in plain language and are provided in an accessible.
  - Corporate administration staff received training on accessible documents.

Accessible forms:

- Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division and Criminal Law Division have collaborated to revise the Victim Impact Statement (VIS) so that it is in a more accessible format. Reviews of VIS forms from other provinces and territories are being assessed to determine if further enhancements are required.
- The Ontario Victims Services' Forms and Template committee has reviewed and made revisions to over 26 English and French letters and templates used across the province to ensure that the content was in plain language and easier to understand.
- Family Policy and Programs branch revised their request for proposal document to make it more accessible.
- The Supervised Access program created large print and e-reader versions of their public materials.
- The Chief Administration Office has made it mandatory that staff create accessible presentations when requesting a meeting with the Assistant Deputy Attorney General. New accessible PowerPoint and action request form templates have been developed to assist staff.

Accessible feedback processes:

- Legal Services Division (LSD) conducted client satisfaction surveys of their educational programs and ensured that their external survey provider used a software application that supported accessibility requirements.
- The ministry's Freedom of Information Office (FOI) developed a feedback process that notifies customers when they will receive acknowledgement of their verbal/telephone feedback and every effort is made to provide the response in a format that is accessible to the person who requested the feedback.
- Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division (VVPD) implemented four ways to track feedback; including adding an accessibility feedback button on their intranet site.
- Court Services Division's Client Satisfaction Survey collected feedback throughout the province and used this information to improve local services. Clients have the option of doing the survey in two ways, either in-person or online, so that they can share feedback in a way that meets their needs.

2. Another commitment the ministry made was that the Provincial Offences Act (POA) Unit of the Courts Services Division would work with its municipal partners to identify a process to support requests from people with disabilities for accessible formats of

Provincial Offences Act forms. The ministry also stated that the POA was also working to identify the most commonly used forms and to develop a strategy for ensuring those forms are accessible.

Achievements

- The Criminal and POA Policy and Programs branches are currently piloting two new forms: a judicial interim release order and a recognizance of bail form. Both of these new forms have been developed using plain language instead of legal language. In addition, the recognizance of bail form is screen-reader compatible in both English and French.

3. The ministry also made the commitment that the Family Policy and Programs Branch of the Courts Services Division would begin a project to address the accessibility, plain language and ease of use of the eight most commonly used family court forms.

Achievements

- Family Policy and Programs branch continued to work with the Family Rules Committee to explore options to address the accessibility, plain language and ease of use of the most-frequently used family court forms. Staff is in the process of identifying specialists with the skills required to revise the forms.

4. Last year, the ministry made the commitment that the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy application and personal information authorization forms (English and French) would be revised to meet accessibility requirements.

Achievements

- The forms are being revised with an expected completion date of November 2013.

Accessible Websites and Software applications

Effective January 1, 2012, as part of the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility and Standards Regulations (IASR), all significantly refreshed websites or new websites must meet AODA requirements to be WCAG 2.0 (level AA) compliant. Websites includes internet, intranet, and web based applications accessed by staff and the public.

The ministry is committed to continuously improving accessibility of its websites. Below are the achievements the ministry has recorded against the commitments it expressed in the 2012-13 ODA plan.

1. The ministry made a commitment that its Communication Branch and Accessibility Unit would continue to work co-operatively with ministry divisions to monitor and report on new or significantly refreshed websites or web applications through the Accessibility Quarterly Reporting process.

Achievements

- In August 2013, the Court Services Division Family Case Closing Statistics (FMCC) web application was updated to ensure compliance with the AODA.
- In 2012, the Agency Relations Division developed a SharePoint extranet site containing resources for agencies. This site was designed to be a centralized location of resources for agencies. The site was designed using the standardized OPS SharePoint template. To test for WCAG 2.0 (AA) compliance, the division engaged the OPS I &IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence. The results of the assessment indicated that the site was over 90% compliant with WCAG 2.0 (AA) standards. The division will be making ongoing improvements to increase accessibility.
- All documents on the Justice on Target section of the ministry's intranet site are available in accessible format and the site is accessible.
- Justice Sector Security Office worked to ensure that their intranet website is accessible; in addition, all existing PDF documents have been transferred into accessible Word format.
- Project Management Office completed a redesign of its Resource Centre, located on the ministry's intranet site. The office will ensure that the site is fully accessible, including making all videos available in an accessible format with transcripts.

2. The ministry also made a commitment that the Accessibility Unit of the ministry would complete its two year project to implement assistive listening devices in all permanent courthouses with the assistance of courthouse Accessibility Coordinators and the Justice Technology Service. Assistive listening devices are the most frequently requested accommodation in courthouses.

Achievements

- The assistive listening devices have been implemented at all permanent courthouses and are available upon request for all court users and ministry clients, including parties in a court proceeding, lawyers, judges, jurors, witnesses, and Supervised Access Program participants.

- Key staff members at each base courthouse have been trained on the set-up and operation of the assistive listening devices and signs are posted in courthouses about the availability of assistive listening devices. Information about assistive listening devices and how to request them has been posted on the ministry's website. More information can be found on "Our Commitment to Accessibility" webpage.

Employment

The ministry is dedicated to ensuring that it meets the accessibility needs of current and future employees. The ministry adheres to fair and barrier free recruitment processes to ensure that the government can hire and retain the best talent that Ontario has to offer. It is the goal of the ministry to ensure that employment barriers are eliminated so that all employees can contribute to their full capacity.

1. The ministry made the commitment to adhere to OPS Employment Accommodation policies and procedures including the new IASR employment requirements which include providing employees with disabilities with emergency evacuation information and documented accommodation plans upon request. The ministry also stated there would be on-going reminders for MAG managers about their obligation to accommodate employees with disabilities.

Achievements

- All staff, including managers, received training about the accessible employment requirements under the IASR, which included requirements about employment accommodation and related written plans, emergency planning, and evacuation.

2. The ministry also committed to addressing the accommodation needs of ministry employees and judicial officials in ministry courthouses.

Achievements

- The ministry accessed the Regional Health & Safety Advisors of the Centre for Employee Health, Safety & Wellness to complete ergonomic assessments as a preventative measure and to accommodate staff.
- The ministry accessed the OPS Employee Accommodation Fund to be reimbursed for employee accommodation costs. For example, a division was reimbursed $1000, for the purchase of employee equipment.
- Zoom Text was installed at three Toronto courthouses for an employee who had to work at multiple locations. As part of an accommodation request, the employee was only assigned work at these three locations.
- In Barrie, the management and staff worked with Court Security division to accommodate staff by allowing staff to access exit doors closer to the employee parking lot.
- In 2012-2013, the ministry continued to provide a representative to the Ontario Public Service Disability Advisory Council (DAC) which includes representatives from each ministry. The ministry's representative continues to act as Chair of the Council. The Council provides a voice for employees with disabilities in the OPS on issues that affect them and offers advice to the Ontario Public Service on improving accessibility.
- In addition, the Accessibility Unit of the ministry supported the attendance of 8 council members from across the OPS to attend a symposium on employee resource groups for employees with disabilities. The symposium was an opportunity to learn about the experience of employee resource groups for employees with disabilities in other organizations.

3. Another commitment the ministry made was that the Human Resources Strategic Business Unit will analyse results of focus groups with employees with disabilities held in the fall of 2012 in order to identify issues and develop a plan to improve the engagement of employees with disabilities.

Achievements

- In the fall of 2012, the Human Resources Strategic Business unit facilitated focus groups with employees with disabilities about their levels of engagement and accessibility concerns. In 2013, the Human Resources Strategic Business unit analysed the findings and took the following initial steps to begin to address some of the issues raised.

- Focus group results were shared with senior management and communicated to all ministry staff.
- The Human Resources Strategic Business Unit (HRSBU) issued written reminders to managers about the resources available to support them in addressing accessibility and employment accommodation matters.
- The Human Resources Strategic Business unit informed employees about ways to report accessibility problems in their workplaces; and an anonymous reporting method was created to support this process.
- Options are being explored for more training for managers about workplace discrimination and harassment, and other strategies for addressing concerns discussed in the focus groups.

Built Environment

The ministry is committed to continuously improve accessibility in new buildings and renovations. The identification, removal and prevention of accessibility barriers in ministry courthouses and buildings are on-going challenges that the ministry is committed to addressing. It is the goal of MAG to achieve accessibility in and around its facilities by 2025.

The following are a list of the ministry's achievements on the commitments made last year on improving accessibility of its built environment:

1. In last year's 2012-2013 Accessibility Plan, the ministry committed to the following:
   - To incorporate advance accessibility in new courthouses: Waterloo, Quinte, and Thunder Bay.
   - To develop a multi-year accessibility strategy to continuously improve accessibility in Ontario government courthouse portfolio for people with disabilities.
   - To perform pilot accessibility audits in three exiting courthouses. The information from the audit will be used to complete a standard approach for accessibility audits considering up-to-date accessibility standards.
   - To continue to address accessibility in new buildings, in renovations and where needed as updates to existing buildings.

Achievements

- The ministry opened two new courthouses in 2013: Waterloo Region and Quinte courthouses. It is expected that new courthouses in St. Thomas and Thunder Bay

will be operational in 2014. These four courthouses include barrier-free access to public spaces, public counters, courtrooms, jury boxes, witness boxes, and spectator areas; and more advanced accessibility features, such as height adjustable lecterns.

- The ministry is working on its Accessible Built Environment Strategy which outlines how the ministry will achieve accessibility in its buildings by 2025. As of the fall of 2013, the following work is completed or underway:
  - Preliminary accessibility audits have been conducted in some courthouses to better understand areas that need improvement for the coming year.
  - Work has begun on the development of an Accessible Design Standard for courthouses and other buildings owned or occupied by the ministry. The standard will include advanced accessibility features and best-practices. An implementation policy will be developed that will outline how the standard may apply to new projects, planning studies and feasibility studies.
  - Consultations have occurred with the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee on the strategy and plans.

- The ministry completed accessibility projects at many courthouses and court locations. Some of the completed projects are listed below:

Toronto Region:

- Ontario Children Lawyers Office at 393 University (14th floor): the ministry created accessible routes in certain areas of the suite and improved the required accessibility features of the unisex barrier-free washroom in the suite.

- Accessible counter renovations: the ministry has created and or renovated several public service counters at various court locations. Some court locations that have been renovated include: College Park at 444 Yonge Street, 311 Jarvis and 47 Sheppard Avenue. Renovations were made to provide barrier free access when serving persons with disabilities.

North Region:

- In Kenora: a non-barrier-free service counter on the ground floor was replaced with one that accommodates people in a wheelchair, and a fully accessible workstation was installed.

- In Timmins: a judicial chamber was retrofitted to be fully accessible.

- In Sault Ste. Marie: a basement was reconfigured to meet the functional needs and accessibility needs of persons working in the Crown interview rooms.

Projects East Region:

- In L'Orignal: an accessible judicial and an accessible washroom were retrofitted.
- In Ottawa: two accessible witness boxes were added to the existing motions rooms
- In Fort Frances: a courtroom was reconfigured with an accessible dais, court clerk, reporter, registrar, and witness box.

Projects Central Region:

- At the Brampton and Durham Courthouses: the existing 12 person jury box was modified to create a 14 person jury box with an accessible juror position.
- At the Barrie Courthouse: an accessible prisoner interview room (accessible for both the prisoner and lawyer) was implemented as part of a security project.
- At the Brampton Courthouse: two accessible judicial chambers were completed and an additional three are being considered for accessibility.
- In Milton and Richmond Hill: accessible service counters have been installed.

Projects West Region:

- At the St. Catharine`s Courthouse - Courtrooms 6 and 7: An accessible dais was completed in both these courtrooms.
- More work on the ministry's Built Environment strategy will continue into 2014 and future years. See Section Two: Report on Proposed Commitments for 2013-2014 for more information about the ministry's future plans.

2. The ministry's Facilities Management Branch also made a commitment to implement new signage designed to be accessible (with large font, good contrast and braille) and to help people find their way in courthouses in 12 courthouse sites.

Achievements

- Accessible signage has been implemented in ten courthouse sites including courthouses in Ottawa, Toronto, Barrie, Newmarket and Kenora. Some accessible signs are bilingual (English and French), trilingual (English, French and Aboriginal), and include Braille or tactile text.

Procurement

The ministry is committed to ensuring that managers and procurement staff consider accessibility requirements when acquiring products and services, as well as, when developing third party contracts. Requiring accessibility in government contracts allows the ministry to make vendors aware of the need to provide accessible services and products. Ministry staff are required to demonstrate that they have checked for the elimination of accessibility barriers when developing or signing procurement contracts.

Below are some of the achievements the ministry has recorded against the commitments it made last year.

1. The Ministry made a commitment to ensure that managers and procurement staff will continue to monitor procurements to ensure they include accessibility, and that the Accessibility Unit will continue to provide advice and assistance as needed. The ministry also stated that the Accessibility Unit will continue to communicate and post any additional corporate or other resources on accessibility in procurement and will issue reminders to divisions about their obligations on procurement. The ministry committed that reminders will also be shared with divisions to consider accessibility requirements in contracts with third party providers.

Achievements

- The ministry created an accessible Request for Proposal procurement package for the procurement of Family Mediation and Information Services at courts. Service providers were informed that they would need to comply with all applicable requirements, specifications and standards for accessibility established by the ministry to be considered for a government contract.

- Accessibility was considered when purchasing furniture for the ministry's new courthouse projects. For example, all the workstations purchased are height-adjustable to accommodate a wide range of needs. Also, extra chairs that accommodate a wide range of needs (e.g. ergonomic, fully adjustable, with or without arms, wider seat) have been purchased and are available upon request. In addition, fully-adjustable seating was purchased in St. Thomas for the jury box in all courtrooms and height-adjustable tables will be provided for staff in all private offices including the Judiciary.

- The ministry revised its procurement document, the Procurement Tracking Number (PTN) Advice Sheet, by reformatting the structure and selecting accessibility resources that better assist program areas with their procurement activities. The Accessibility Unit provided advice to procurement staff regarding the revision of the advice sheet and discussions were held about the need to review and or develop a MAG accessibility checklist as part of the procurement approval process.

- Ministry event planners considered accessibility in their procurement of event sites:
    - Supervised Access program staff visited event venues prior to selecting sites for their provincial regional training meetings that took place in October 2013. All potential venues were asked to provide information on accessibility before decisions were made.
    - The Human Resources Strategic Business unit procurement for the MAG Directors' conference ensured that facilities were accessible.
    - When booking its annual stakeholder conference, French Language Services only awarded ministry contracts to hotels that met accessibility requirements.

Training

The ministry recognizes that improving accessibility in an organization requires that employees are aware of disability issues and trained in improving accessibility throughout the organization. Ministry staff are required to complete mandatory accessibility training and encouraged to participate in additional accessibility or disability training activities.

Below are the achievements the ministry recorded against its commitments to training on accessibility.

1. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR) requires that the ministry train and track the training results of all employees. Therefore, the ministry made a commitment that it will complete the following:
    - Managers and Supervisors will be required to take additional training on accommodating employees with disabilities.
    - The Accessibility unit will coordinate the new mandatory IASR accessibility training for the ministry.
    - The ministry will require that mandatory accessibility training occur with the service providers who work on behalf of the ministry.

Achievements

- The Accessibility unit coordinated the implementation of the new IASR training requirement that came in to effect January 1, 2013. The ministry required that all staff and management complete two mandatory accessibility modules: the general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. MAG tracks employee training to ensure that everyone completes the requirement.

- In addition, MAG required that all new staff complete the mandatory accessibility training on Customer Service for persons with disabilities.

- As a pre-requisite to appearing on the Registry of Accredited Freelance Court Interpreters, the ministry required that potential interpreters attend a two day training session which included mandatory accessibility training. In addition to the accessibility training that had already been incorporated, current interpreters had to successfully complete the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (IASR) and the Human Right Codes with Respect to Persons with Disabilities to ensure that the ministry's accessibility standards were met.

- The ministry also required that mandatory accessibility training be completed by staff at third party organizations who provided programs and services on behalf of the ministry.

2. The ministry also made a commitment that the Accessibility Unit would coordinate a project to procure and offer specialized training on understanding the accessibility needs of assistive device users and on compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines for websites and web applications for approximately 80 staff.

    - The ministry is revisiting this commitment. In 2014, a new plan will be established for improving knowledge and understanding about compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and accessible web applications.

3. The ministry also committed that it would continue working on a two-year community project by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Toronto Branch to develop a training package for the justice sector on communicating with people with mental health disabilities. The project is funded by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario of the Ministry of Community and Social Services through its Enabling Change Partnerships Project.

Achievements

- During the past year, ministry staff participated on both the project steering committee and advisory committee and provided input on their training needs through focus groups in Kingston, Belleville, Sudbury and Toronto. The project developed a training needs assessment and is currently in the curriculum development stage where ministry staff has provided input on communication scenarios that commonly occur in ministry services.

- The project also included input from other participants in the justice sector including the bar, organizations of and for persons with mental health disabilities, and persons with lived experience of mental health disabilities.

- In November of 2012, the ministry coordinated presentations to the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee by representatives of the Ontario Human Rights Commissions on the Commission's Policy on Competing Human Rights and by the Law Commission of Ontario on the work of Commission on Evaluating Law, Policy and Practices as they Affect Persons with Disabilities: A Law Commission of Ontario Framework. In February of 2013, the ministry Accessibility Unit hosted a special Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee meeting for a discussion on accessibility with visiting retired Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, Zac Yacoob. Former Justice Yacoob has been blind since childhood.

Additional Accessibility Training:

While there are mandatory training requirements for MAG employees and service providers, the ministry also encourages employees to take additional accessibility training to better understand the complexity of accessibility and disability issues.

Some of the achievements for the ministry include:

Achievements

- The Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division (VVPD) organized information sessions and trainings on mental health and addictions. Training was delivered in person and via Adobe Connect/teleconference.

- Six mental health webinars were held as part of Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division's Diversity and Inclusion Mental Health Raising Awareness Series. The webinars were well attended by staff and included topics on a wide range of mental health issues including: "Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health among Spanish-Speaking Latin American Women in Toronto"; "Using an ethnical lens to consider mental health and addiction case studies" and "Perceptions of Mental Health among Rwandan Refugees in Toronto."

- On July 10, 2013, a presentation was made to the Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Program's Advisory Committee. Participants received an update on accessibility and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

- On July 5, 2013, 15 employees from the Office of the Children's Lawyer attended a session on Deaf Culture. The session was called "Can you see me signing?" This session highlighted some biases and raised awareness around respectfully interacting with a member of the Deaf culture.

- On November 26, 2012, many ministry staff attended the annual OPS Accessibility Expo in partnership with the Jobs Opportunity Information Network (JOIN). The

Expo provided staff an opportunity to learn more about disability and accessibility issues in the workplace.

Additional Achievements:

Disability Stakeholder Engagement

- In March 2013, the ministry invited disability stakeholders to a mock-up of a courtroom that was developed for the St. Thomas Consolidated Courthouse. The mock-up provided the disability community an opportunity to see and provide feedback on the proposed accessibility features for the new courthouse. The St. Thomas Accessibility Committee was invited to view and provide comments. In addition, the ministry is developing a consultation strategy to guide its engagement with disability stakeholders.

- On October 2, 2013, the ministry's Agencies and Tribunals consulted with representatives from the accessibility community to identify barriers and potential mitigation strategies as part of their accessibility planning process. Stakeholders included: the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; the Canadian National Institute for the Blind; the Canadian Hearing Society; the Learning Disabilities Association of the Toronto District; the Centre for Independent Learning; OCAD University; the Inclusion Office at Service Ontario; Community Living Ontario and the ARCH Disability Law Centre. The stakeholder consultation was coordinated by the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, Agencies with the Agency Inclusion Community of Practice. Approximately 80 employees and management from the agencies, tribunals and ministry attended.

MAG Student Accommodations

- As part of the ministry ongoing dedication to ensuring that it meets the accessibility needs of current and future employees, the ministry also made a commitment to extend provisions on accommodation to students and interns who have disabilities.
    - The ministry communicated with law student hiring managers in July 2013 regarding the requirement and procedures involved in providing accommodations in the articling student interview process.
    - The accommodations implemented for an Ontario Children's Lawyer 2013 Articling with mobility issues included:
        - Making adjustments to the counters and table tops that she would be using.

- Reviewing the accessible washrooms to ensure that there was accessible signage, grab bars, sufficient room for manoeuvring, sink and toilet at an accessible height and sufficient door width.
- Fitting the doors with automatic openers; and
- Arranging for the workspace to be setup prior to the student's arrival in the office.

- An accommodation for a social work student with a physical disability required the arrangement of suitable seating and development of a flexible work schedule.

Section Two: Report on Proposed Commitments for 2013 - 14

Last year, the OPS published a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) that outlines how the government will identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. In this section, although we highlight the deliverables and timelines of the MYAP until 2016, the Ministry of the Attorney General is only reporting on commitments proposed during the November 1, 2013 – October 31, 2014 reporting period.

Customer Service and Procurement

MYAP Outcomes

People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

2013 - MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013:	New staff trained on accessibility
2013:	Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training
2013:	Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace
2014 – 16:	Staff and customer feedback sought on accessibility innovations and improvements
2014 – 16:	Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices
2014 – 16:	Accessibility is part of all OPS business

2013 -14 - Proposed Commitments

Accessibility Coordinator/Lead Service

- The ministry will continue to provide the Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Lead service in all court houses and crown offices. More information on the Accessibility Coordinator service, including contact information, can be found on the ministry's website, under the Court address section. **Timeframe: On-going**

- The ministry will implement the training plan developed for the courts' Accessibility Coordinators and Accessibility Leads. Training will be provided on two topics:
    - Accessibility for people with a hearing loss or who are Deaf; and
    - Disability accommodation and the Ontario Human Rights Code
    - **Timeframe - On-going**

Customer Service Feedback

- The ministry will review and analyse accessibility feedback received from our customers in order to facilitate continuous improvement in MAG's programs and services. **Timeframe - On-going**
- Divisions will explore ways to track customer satisfaction with respect to accessibility in the programs and services offered by the ministry. For example, accessibility information will be requested at the end of project implementation. **Timeframe - Sept. 2014**

Scent Free Initiative

- The ministry will finalize and implement a plan for promoting awareness about the health impacts of fragrances and scented products on people who have multiple chemical sensitivities, environmental sensitivities or other health conditions such as asthma and allergies. **Timeframe - 2014**

Procurement

- The ministry will continue to inform employees of the requirement to purchase goods and services that meet or exceed accessibility requirements. Management staff will be reminded of the accessibility procurement resources provided by the OPS and the ministry. **Timeframe - On-going**

Information and Communications

MYAP Outcomes

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats to all OPS staff and customers.

2013 - 14 - MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013: Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training

2013: Accessibility Expo

2014 – 16: Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices

2014 – 16: Accessibility Expo continues annually

2013 - 14 Proposed Commitments

Accessible Feedback

- The ministry will continue to ensure that it collects and provides feedback information in accessible formats upon request. **Timeframe – On-going**

Accessible Formats & Communications Supports

- The ministry will inform the public that OPS information is available in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request. **Timeframe – January 1, 2014**

- The ministry, in partnership with the Accessibility Unit (AU), will host awareness sessions on the following topics: accessible documents and communication supports; and accessible meetings and events. This will help to support compliance with the new IASR requirement and raise general awareness about these topics. **Timeframe - May 2014**

- The Accessibility Unit will identify training resources that help to increase knowledge about accessibility within the ministry. **Timeframe – January 2014**

- The ministry's corporate services division will conduct plans to ensure that the documents on its websites are written in plain language and formatted in an accessible manner. **Timeframe – On-going**

- Ministry divisions will continue to revise their key documents to ensure that they are in accessible formats. Divisions will also continue to implement processes to ensure that alternative formats and communication supports can be provided to the public and employees with disabilities upon request. **Timeframe – On-going**

Accessible Websites & Applications' Strategy

- The AU will work in partnership with the Justice Technology Sector Cluster to support compliance with the website requirements under the IASR. **Timeframe – On-going**
- The Communications' branch, in partnership with the I &IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence, will continue to conduct tests of MAG's websites and identify issues that can be easily fixed or avoided in the future. **Timeframe - May 2014**
- The Communications' branch will re-write information on the ministry's public facing website to make it easier to understand and access; the site will be transferred to the new Ontario.ca platform. **Timeframe - 2014 -2015**
- Legal Services Division will review upgrading their Portal/Intranet site to SharePoint 2010 to enhance accessibility. **Timeframe - April 2014**
- The Justice Sector Security Office will ensure that their current website is accessible and transfer any existing PDF documents to accessible formats. They will also ensure that the forms used by the office are accessible. **Timeframe - October 2014**

Sign Language Interpreter Strategy

- Courts Services Division (CSD) will continue working to develop and implement a strategy to enhance the availability of qualified sign language interpreters for court services. In addition, CSD will compile the results of their/ stakeholder consultations and finalize strategic recommendations. **Timeframe – On-going**

Teletype (TTY) Strategy

- The Accessibility Unit will continue to coordinate a ministry TTY strategy to improve communication with people with disabilities who use TTY's. Several sites are involved in testing a new corporate computer-based TTY supported by the Office of the Corporate Chief Information Officer. Results of the pilot will be used to develop a plan of action for the ministry. **Timeframe - September 2014**

Employment

MYAP Outcomes

People with disabilities who are OPS employees participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

2013 – 14 MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013: Conduct management review on accommodation for employees with disabilities

2013: Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace

2013: Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments

2014 – 16: Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented

2014 – 16: Better accommodation for employees with disabilities resulting from management review

2014 – 16: Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments.

2013 - 14 Proposed Commitments

Employee Accommodation

- An Accessibility section will be created online to assist managers in their duty to accommodate staff. **Timeframe - June 2014**

2014 Employee Engagement Survey

- The ministry will conduct its Employee Engagement survey which includes an assessment of the needs of employees with disabilities. **Timeframe - Oct. 2014**

Employees with Disabilities Focus Group

- The ministry will continue to review the recommendations made by the Employees with Disabilities' Focus Groups and options will be explored to provide more training for managers about workplace discrimination and harassment. Other strategies for addressing concerns raised through the focus groups will be considered. **Timeframe - On-going**

Accessibility Learning Commitments for Managers and Staff

- The ministry will consider revising the 2014 -15 performance plan template to include a request that staff add a learning commitment to their performance plan related to accessibility. **Timeframe - March 2014**

Built Environment

MYAP Outcomes

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

2013 – 14 MYAP Deliverables and Timelines - Government Facilities

2013: Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers

2014 - 16: OPS ready to implement requirements of AODA built environment regulation.

2013 -14 Proposed Commitments – Government Facilities

Accessibility Built Environment Strategy

- The ministry will continue working on its Accessible Built Environment Strategy which outlines how the ministry will achieve accessibility in its buildings by 2025. The following is planned for 2014 and future years:
    - Accessibility audits of court facilities will be conducted to understand which areas need improvement. **Timeframe - On-going**
    - There will be continued development of the Accessible Design Standards that outline advanced accessibility features and best practices for courthouses and other ministry buildings. **Timeframe - 2014-2015**
    - Development of an implementation policy that will outline how the standard may apply to new projects, planning and feasibility studies. **Timeframe - 2014-2015**
    - Creation of a multi-year implementation plan that will outline priorities and projects to remove and prevent barriers in buildings, in incremental stages to 2025. **Timeframe - Nov. 2014 & on-going**

Accessibility Projects – Built Environment

- The Associate Deputy Minister's Office - Innovation Office will continue working on a plan to redesign and reconfigure existing office space at 720 Bay. The redesign will allow for more work space and a more flexible work environment which will include a collaborative workspace. **Timeframe - September 2014**

Public Spaces

- The ministry will prepare for the January 1, 2015 compliance with the public spaces requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation. Accessibility audits that are being conducted as a part of the ministry's Accessible Built Environment Strategy will include an evaluation of the accessibility of service counters, exterior paths of travel and spaces, and accessible parking. **Timeframe - On-going**

Training and Leadership

MYAP Outcomes

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.

2013-14 MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013: Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities

2013: Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans

2014 – 16: Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment

2013 - 14 Proposed Commitments

Mandatory Accessibility Training

- Designated ministry staff and managers will receive additional training about the Information and Communications Standard to support the ministry's IASR compliance and improve understanding about accessible communications. **Timeframe - September 2014**

- Designated ministry staff and all managers will receive additional training about the Employment Standard to support the ministry's IASR compliance and improve understanding about workplace accommodation for employees with disabilities. **Timeframe - September 2014**

Mental Health Training for the Justice Sector

- The Accessibility Unit will continue to coordinate the ministry's involvement in a two-year community project by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Toronto Branch to develop a training package for the justice sector on communicating with

people with mental health disabilities. The project is funded by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment through its Enabling Change Partnerships Project.

  - A member of the Accessibility Unit will continue to participate on the Steering committee for the project and members of the Criminal Law Division, Courts Services Division will continue to participate on the Advisory Committee for the project.

  - Additional staff will participate in other activities such as participating in a pilot of the training. **Timeframe - 2014**

- The Legal Services Division, in cooperation with the ministry Accessibility Unit, will explore the needs of OPS legal staff for further training on the human rights of persons with disabilities as it applies in legal practice. This work will include exploring partnerships on delivering such training. **Timeframe - 2014**

Accessibility Leadership

- The ministry's Chief Administrative Officer will continue as the ministry's Accessibility Executive Champion responsible for elevating issues of accessibility throughout the ministry. The Chief Administrative Officer will also continue as a member of the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee and as a member of the Ontario Public Service Inter-ministerial Accessibility and Diversity Council. **Timeframe - On-going**

- The ministry's leadership team will support strategies that will assist the ministry to meet its IASR obligations in areas such as, web accessibility, procurement, and public spaces. **Timeframe - On-going**

- The ministry will explore opportunities to engage with disability stakeholders. **Timeframe - 2014**

Centralized Accessibility Unit

- The ministry will continue to offer a centre of accessibility expertise to ministry staff and management. The Accessibility Unit will continue to work with the Ontario Courts Accessibility Committee and its subcommittees as well as with the ministry Accessibility Executive Steering Committee and the Courts Accessibility Subcommittee to monitor and improve accessibility in the courts and in the ministry. **Timeframe - On-going**

Section Three: Report on Legislative Review

In support of our commitment to improve access for people with disabilities, the Ministry of the Attorney General will continue to review government legislation and policies to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2012 - 13

The Ministry of the Attorney General, in partnership with the Ministry of Government Services, is playing a leadership role in supporting other ministries in their review of legislation for accessibility barriers. Recognizing the importance of addressing accessibility barriers in laws that have a high impact on members of the public and persons with disabilities, the government is following a three-pronged strategy that will prioritize the review of high impact legislation including:

1. Development of standardized processes and tools to identify and address accessibility barriers;
2. Review of high impact statutes by the end of 2014; and
3. Review of procedural rules, policies and guidelines for select high impact legislation, where necessary.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to be reviewed in 2013 - 14

By the end of 2014, the government will review 52 targeted high-impact statutes that meet the following criteria:

a) Statutes that affect persons with disabilities directly;

b) Statutes that provide for the delivery of widely applicable services or programs;

c) Statutes that provide benefits or protections; or

d) Statutes that affect a democratic or civic right or duty; and review of procedural rules, policies and guidelines for select high-impact legislation, where necessary.

This phase of the review will be completed by the end of 2014. The government has decided to review these statutes because it is anticipated that changes in these areas will

have the highest impact on those Ontarians who have accessibility needs. As part of this process, the Ministry of the Attorney General will review the following 16 statutes:

- Blind Persons' Rights Act
- Compensation for Victims of Crime Act
- Election Act
- Employers and Employees Act
- Family Law Act
- Human Rights Code
- Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act, 2002
- Juries Act
- Legal Aid Services Act, 1998
- Limitations Act, 2002
- Parental Responsibility Act, 2000
- Public Guardian and Trustee Act
- Real Property Limitations Act
- Substitute Decisions Act, 92
- Trustee Act
- Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995

Progress will be reported annually in the ministry's accessibility plan.

Glossary of Terms and/or Acronyms

ADMO – Associate Deputy Minister's Office

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ARD – Agency Relations Division

ASCS - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

CSD – Courts Services Division

CSMD – Corporate Services Management Division

CLD – Criminal Law Division

FMB – Facilities Management Branch

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

I&IT – Information and Infrastructure Technology

LSD – Legal Services Division

MAG - Ministry of Attorney General

MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

OLC – Office of the Legislative Counsel

OPS – Ontario Public Service

PATD – Policy and Adjudicative Tribunals Division

TTY – Teletype or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

VVPD – Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division

WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

How to Contact us

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Visit the **AccessOn web portal on the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade** website. AccessOn provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

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